

Cartographic, Photogrammetric, and Related Records

This schedule covers cartographic, photogrammetric, and related records that have been created, used, or located in agencies of the Federal Government. Disposal authorizations contained herein are not applicable to records created before January 1, 1860. Records created prior to that date are not disposable unless specific approval of their disposal is obtained from the Congress.

Among the cartographic records are maps and such variant forms of graphic presentation as charts (hydrographic, nautical, weather, aeronautical, and the like), cartograms, globes, and relief models, which have been prepared or used in connection with the official activities of the United States Government. The maps and charts are listed in various stages of completion from the planetable or similar drawing to the final publication. The word "publication" as used in this schedule means reproduction by printing, photographic, and other methods in multiple copies, whether for limited or general distribution.

The photogrammetric records include the aerial film and other photographic materials used in mapping. The related textual records are those which form an integral part of the map-making activities of agencies and include field survey notes; project, map history, and similar files; controls and computations; and finding aids.

This schedule covers the principal categories of records that are common to several or all agencies. Records not included are of such a specialized character that they are not readily susceptible to evaluation on a Government-wide basis. For example, the schedule covers annotated maps used in intermediate stages of the preparation of a published map. These annotated maps are essentially working papers used by all map-making agencies in similar ways. Annotated maps that are unique and an end in themselves are not, however, covered. This is because it is impossible to state in general terms which of these have enduring value and which are disposable. Among such records are military campaign and order of battle maps, international boundary maps, cadastral maps, and maps showing property lines and rights of way.

The map-making and map-using activities of the Government have increased many times over during the past several decades and the making of a modern map has become exceedingly complex. This is largely the result of the development of photogrammetry, the science of obtaining reliable measurements of the earth's surface by means of photography.

The rapid increase in mapping activities and the complex methods required to achieve a final product have resulted in the creation of a large volume of records of varying degrees of importance. Most of these records lose their usefulness after specified periods of time and can therefore be disposed of. Certain records, created or used in the process of making a map, however, have continuing value. They should be transferred to a Federal Records Center or to the National Archives when they are no longer needed in the current operations of the agency holding them. Normally cartographic and related records created or used in offices outside the Washington area should be transferred to the nearest Federal Records Center. In the Washington area records of continuing value should be transferred to the National Archives or the Region 3 Federal Records Center.

Cartographic records of continuing legal, administrative, and research value are of two principal kinds: (1) those created or checked in the field on the basis of surveys and observations or from photogrammetric sources; and (2) one copy of each edition or variant of each published map.

The first group is retained as the primary source material from which the published maps are taken and which often contains more information than is included in the publications. The published maps are retained as the sum of the map-making accomplishments of the agency as well as for administrative, legal, and research use.

The records created in the intermediate stages of map-making, between the original survey records and the final maps, are for the most part temporary records and can be disposed of in accordance with provisions of this schedule.

There is not a sufficiently standardized terminology to permit the use of universally accepted titles for the various records created in the map-making process. For that reason additional descriptions of the records covered by each item are included in the appraisal section of the schedule.

CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS

The cartographic records listed below include the most significant ones created in the map-making agencies of the Federal Government. The items are listed approximately in the order in which the records are created during the map-making process regardless of whether the maps are based on field work or office compilation.

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(10-4-54)

PHOTOGRAMMETRIC RECORDS

Photogrammetric records are being used to an increasing extent by map-making and map-using agencies, particularly by agencies responsible for mapping extensive areas. Much of the aerial photography required by the agencies is done for them by private organizations under contract. The negative film is supplied to the agency which can then make as many prints as it needs. The aerial film is of enduring value as the primary source of information on physical and cultural landscapes. The film contains the most complete and accurate information available not only for legal and administrative requirements but also for research.

Since most modern aerial film is on a safety acetate base, provision is made in this schedule for its retirement to a Federal Records Center. It should be noted, however, that nitro-cellulose film normally will not be accepted by the National Archives or Federal Records Centers owing to the special handling it requires.

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION OF RECORDS	AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION
19.	<u>Vertical and oblique negative aerial films.</u>	Disposal not authorized by this schedule. (Transfer to Federal Records Center when superseded by more recent film.)
20.	Photo index sheets, flight line indexes, and similar finding aids (negatives and prints).	Disposal not authorized by this schedule. (Transfer to Federal Records Center when records to which they relate are transferred.)
21.	Record set of aerial mosaics and similar prints covering selected areas.	Disposal not authorized by this schedule. (Transfer to Federal Records Center when no longer needed in current transactions.)
22.	Record set of contact aerial photographic prints.	Disposal not authorized by this schedule. (Transfer to Federal Records Center when no longer needed in current transactions.)
23.	Precise film negatives of stereophotogrammetric manuscript drawings.	Dispose 1 year after publication of the resultant map.
24.	Diapositives.	Dispose 1 year after publication of the resultant map.
25.	Precise film negatives of maps other than the stereophotogrammetric manuscript used for field completion.	Dispose 1 year after publication of the resultant map or area on that map.

RELATED RECORDS

In order to have a complete and accurate account of mapping plans and programs as well as of the production, flow, and distribution of maps, certain closely related textual records have been developed.

Administrative and housekeeping records pertaining to map-making offices are provided for elsewhere in General Records Schedules, which require the retention of record sets of publications, organizational and functional charts, directives, regulations, speeches, press releases, and similar materials.

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION OF RECORDS	AUTHORIZED DISPOSITION
26.	Project, map history, or similar files.	
	a. Documents outlining the projects.	Disposal not authorized by this schedule. (Transfer to Federal Records Center 1 year after publication of map or completion of project.)
	b. Minor administrative papers summarized in a. above.	Dispose 1 year after publication of map or completion of project.
27.	Research and reference files.	Dispose when obsolete or superseded or upon publication of related map, whichever is later.
28.	Primary controls and computations.	

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Although these are considered as nonrecord items they are noted here because they usually are retained in a map-making agency for a considerable period of time, occupying a large amount of space and requiring special equipment for storage. Except in rare instances these media, once the map has been published, may be unused for a decade or more. A plan should be developed for the disposal or salvage of such of these items as are not absolutely essential for future publication. In most instances, retention of the color separation boards should make unnecessary the retention of the so-called reproduction media.

Item 12. These are reproductions of each of the individual press plates for each color or run and are to the precise scale of reproduction of the final published map. Normally these are not needed longer than one year after publication. In some instances, agencies retain these printed copies on paper either in place of or in addition to press plates. Normally these copies are less stable and useful than the color separation boards, the glass plate and similar photographic negatives, and the press plates, although they require less space and are easier to handle.

Item 13. These generally are published (printed) copies of maps prepared in the agency that have been annotated with specified kinds of information. The annotations on these office copies generally represent corrections of the extant edition of the published map made prior to the issuing of a new edition. These maps are referred to as map correction copies, aid proofs, correction copies, and the like. After publication of the corrected map they are not needed for longer than one year except in rare instances where there may be legal need to give the origins of revisions.

Item 14. Normally one or more special press runs (or hand pulls) are required before final publication of each map. Such proof copies often bear annotations by the editors indicating final changes to be made in line, color, or composition. The records cease to have value soon after the final published map has been accepted.

Item 15. These are mono-color (usually blue) prints of the completed composite manuscript drawing. These prints are advance copies of the final published map and are made available in small numbers as a preliminary edition. They have only temporary record value.

Item 16. Among the most important cartographic records of an agency are its published maps and similar forms of graphic presentation. A record set of these items, which may be printed, photoprocessed, or otherwise reproduced, is of enduring value. They represent the map-making accomplishments of the agency and they contain the significant cartographic information assembled or developed by the agency. One copy of each published map, atlas, portfolio, and photomap, including each edition and variant, and of all related indexes (in map or other form) are to be preserved permanently.

Item 17. Globes and terrain models are prepared and used often to show selected, highly specialized information. They are, like the final manuscript or published maps, of enduring value.

Item 18. Graphic indexes generally take the form of a base map or may be on transparencies or overlays accompanying a base map of an area which is covered by several maps or sets of maps. The indexes indicate in color, line, or by other means the coverage of each map. They should be retained as long as the maps to which they refer are retained as they are finding aids which expedite use of the maps. Other graphic indexes are listed in item 20.

PHOTOGRAMMETRIC

Item 19. This is the negative film made by or for an agency and accepted as satisfactory for use in the preparation of a map. The film normally is "flown" in accordance with a carefully developed and controlled plan and each roll must be identified by letter and number so that it is possible to determine precisely what portion of the earth's surface is represented. The line of flight and the area covered by each is correlated with a photo-index or similar finding aid. Normally the film on a spool is housed within a properly labelled metal container (cylinder) approximately six inches in diameter and about twelve inches long. The aerial photographic film is equivalent in value to records created on the basis of field surveys.

Item 20. These records take several different forms, though basically they are graphic indexes to each roll of negative film. The standard form is a photo-index sheet. The index sheets, together with overlays showing the line and number of flights, descriptive lists, and catalogs of the film described in item 19 are needed as long as the film is needed.

Item 21. Frequently photo prints are assembled, matched, and then reproduced as units covering a specific area. Such mosaics, prepared in connection with particular projects or activities, may have enduring value. Prints in addition to those in the record set can be disposed of when no longer needed.

Item 22. The contact prints made from the aerial film are used in stereoscopic mapping, the preparation of mosaics, and plotting supplemental control, as well as for general terrain information. A record set of these prints can serve as insurance against film loss or damage. Other copies can be disposed of when no longer needed. Provision for retention of a record set of these prints does not mean that an agency should make up a set for this purpose. Only a record set of the prints available after completion of the mapping project is necessary.

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Item 23. These are film negatives of the stereophotogrammetric drawings (item 2) made usually on a large scale. Blueline, brownline, and similar color prints and ozalid copies are made from these precise film negatives for use in field completion activities of the agency. Since these are merely copies of the retained drawings they can be disposed of shortly after publication of the maps.

Item 24. These are positive photographic prints on a transparent medium, usually glass, that have been prepared from aerial film. They are used in a plotting instrument or projector in preparing a map or stereophotogrammetric drawing. They are disposable as working papers after publication of the maps.

Item 25. These are, like the negatives in item 23, made merely in order to prepare prints. They can be disposed of as working papers after publication of the maps.

Item 26. These files which vary from agency to agency are retained because they give in narrative and graphic form a history of the cartographic accomplishments of the agencies. They contain documents showing proposals and outlines of mapping projects planned; authorizations and contracts; periodic reports, memoranda, and correspondence on progress made; lists of sources and place names used; procedures followed in drafting, filming, and editing, and distribution; over-all cost statements; final completion reports, project histories, or papers explaining discontinuance, change, or extension of projects; and, where necessary, attachments in the form of photographs, drawings, maps, plans, and charts.

The minor administrative papers, assembled in connection with projects but not necessary to an adequate history of them, can be disposed of shortly after completion of the projects. Such papers include daily progress and work reports, working papers, and records of personnel assignments and travel, and similar materials.

Item 27. These are files maintained in various forms by offices and individual cartographers on mapping in general and on specialized problems connected with the preparation of specific maps. They constitute the background material which is helpful for reference. They contain copies of publications and of records retained elsewhere and rough working notes. Included are publications; bibliographies; copies or excerpts of correspondence, reports, control data, lists of sources and place names, and related materials; photographs, sketches, maps, plans, and charts; and similar and related materials. While of considerable value to the cartographer in the preparation of a map they need not be retained past the period of their usefulness to the individual or the office. The records listed elsewhere in this schedule, which are to be retained, document sufficiently the cartographic accomplishments of the agencies.

The maps included in these files, if considered rare or valuable items, can be offered when no longer needed by the agency to the Map Division of the Library of Congress. All information and files on place names (i.e. geographic names) when no longer needed can be offered to the United States Board on Geographic Names.

Item 28. In the making of a map to precise specifications one or more controls are considered essential to accuracy. These controls are usually obtained from observations and mensurations in the field and include transit traverse, triangulation, leveling, and altimetry records and field and office computations. The observations and similar control data obtained in the field are usually in field notebooks. Office computations are usually typed, processed, or printed lists.

For the United States and certain other areas the primary controls are developed and made available by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. For other areas controls and computations may have been developed by other Governments, other agencies of this Government, or non-Government sources.

Controls and measurements prepared by the agency itself are of continuing value as the accuracy of the resultant maps is dependent upon them. Those obtained from other agencies of this Government need not be kept after they have served their purpose because they will be held by the creating offices. Those obtained from other sources will need to be kept in order to insure their availability.

Item 29. These include field derived observations that generally are of only temporary value because in most instances the observation is obtained from sighting on non-permanent objects that are subject to change. In most instances the marker, if placed, cannot be controlled.

Item 30. A principal product of nearly all field surveys and observations is the written record usually in the form of a pocket-size notebook. These field survey notes may be a running account of observable material and cultural features of the terrain; a description of subsurface conditions as to water resources, geology, mineral resources, and the like based on a series of readings or measurements in the field; or a log or journal account closely related to and often an integral part of a specific mapping activity whether it is on land or on water. Such records generally are of continuing value because they describe the area as it was observed by the surveyor in the field.

Item 31. Finding aids are tools which expedite the use of cartographic and related records. They need to be kept as long as the records to which they relate. Wherever possible they should be filed with or near the related records. The following are, in addition to the graphic indexes listed in items 18 and 20, the kinds of finding aids generally found in agencies: card indexes; descriptive lists, shelf lists, and the like; registers and similar bound and loose leaf volumes containing lists and descriptions of cartographic records; and published catalogs, calendars, guides, and lists.